



Job Description

Nature-based Solutions Officer

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| Reports to | Head of Water and Land Stewardship |
| Member of | Water and Land Stewardship Team |
| Responsible for | No direct reports. Contractors as/if required |
| Location | Hybrid work at home and in the office based in Leatherhead with travel across the south east, particularly South London, Surrey and Kent. Potential for occasional travel throughout the UK |

The role

The Nature-based Solutions (NbS) Officer will be at the heart of our growing programme of work to better manage landscapes to improve the resilience of catchments, provide natural flood management benefits and replenish water resources. You will be supporting the development of landscape-scale NbS projects and supporting a range of stakeholders to work with natural processes and establish NbS as common practice across our catchments. This will include identifying water and land management issues that are impacting rivers and catchments, and working with landowners and partners to develop NbS solutions to address these issues – including riparian buffers, attenuation wetlands, cover crops and leaky woody dams. The focus will be largely on the rural landscape, and therefore engaging with farmers and growers will be a central part of the role.

Your experience will help identify priority areas for NbS, develop options with landowners, provide support to staff and partners to develop NbS projects, and communicate their value to a wide range of stakeholders and communities. You will be personable and inquisitive, be able to explain technical concepts in simple terms, engage positively with farming businesses, and be passionate about rivers and the environment.

This is an exciting opportunity to join our growing and dynamic Water & Land Stewardship (W&LS) team and make a real difference for the environment. The W&LS team sits within a wider organisation of about 30 staff. We aim to make this a permanent position and continue to expand this team and area of work. The position is initially offered as a 12-month contract while we secure ongoing funding. We will consider both full and part-time (e.g. 0.8 FTE [full time equivalent]) applications.

About us

The South East Rivers Trust is an environmental charity bringing rivers and their catchments back to life. Working in 12 river catchments across the south east, the Trust's mission is to deliver outstanding river ecosystem enhancement through science-based action, collaboration, education and engagement. The Trust uses data and evidence to target positive action and works with nature to make rivers healthy again. This includes tackling water pollution, addressing water scarcity, reconnecting rivers and restoring habitats. www.southeastriverstrust.org.

SERT is a member of the national Rivers Trust, and is part of the rivers trust movement which comprises over 60 local trusts, which are described as having 'wet feet' because they concentrate their efforts on practical environmental enhancement works on the ground.

Working at the South East Rivers Trust is challenging, rewarding, fulfilling and busy; we work collaboratively and with passion, and this is reflected in our core values of: delivering high quality work, using expertise and scientific understanding, building good and effective relationships and bringing positive energy to all we do. If this sounds like an environment that you would thrive in, we would love to hear from you.

Key duties & responsibilities

Nature-based Solution Officer

1. Identification of NbS

- Use risk mapping tools such as SCIMAP and Scalgo to identify priority areas for NbS, including land management measures;
- Support the Senior Natural Capital Officer, GIS staff and Catchment Officers in developing and implementing SERT's Natural Capital mapping approach to identify catchment areas for enhancement and protection;
- Work with SERT colleagues to support catchment partnerships, water companies, local authorities and other partners to understand their priorities for NbS and develop potential opportunities.

2. Engagement with land managers and farmers to identify opportunities for NbS on their land

- Carry out farm surveys and walkovers to ascertain potential for different types of NbS - including soil management measures, wildflower strips, riparian buffers, in-field bunds, leaky woody dams, attenuation wetlands;
- Discuss and advise on different options with farmers and landowners, supporting the development of catchment/landscape nature recovery plans;
- Identify funding sources for the delivery of measures and support farmers in applying for these;
- Coordinate and help facilitate workshops and other engagement events with farmers/landowners to discuss issues, opportunities and solutions linked to NbS.

3. Development /feasibility of NbS

- With farmers/landowners, develop outline designs for measures and/or a land management plan;
- Identify the necessary information for permitting and consents to deliver NbS in compliance with applicable regulations;
- Work with the Catchment Monitoring Officer to identify requirements for NbS monitoring to meet stakeholder needs, and then support the design and implementation of this monitoring;
- Where necessary, support our Restoring Rivers & Catchment (RR&C) team to conduct detailed design of NbS;
- Support our RR&C team to undertake or commission the necessary baseline surveys, and seek landowner, EA and other consents/permissions for delivering NbS;
- For certain measures, support the RR&C team to contract and oversee delivery of NbS.

4. Support SERT staff and stakeholders

- Work with the W&LS team to support internal and external communications about our work – including articles, blogs, events, tweets;
- Support the W&LS team and other staff in representing the Trust at meetings across the south east and maintain our growing reputation in this area;
- Support staff, local catchment partnerships and stakeholders to take a natural capital approach, embed NbS as common practice and identify project opportunities which will implement NbS – aligning the priorities of the Catchment Partnerships and SERT's Geographic Impact Plan;
- Maintain good working relationships with partners, as well as expand and grow relationships with new stakeholders and potential partners as required.

5. Support SERT's mission and values.

- Contribute to and support the work and growth of SERT, delivering the Trust's vision, mission and core values;
- Help identify funding opportunities and fundraising for the Trust's activities;
- Contribute to the Trust's external communications (websites, social media and presentations), profile and good reputation.

Person specification

Please keep this list of competencies in mind, together with the Trust's core values when completing your application. Knowledge, experience, skills and aptitudes will be assessed through the application process and at interview.

| Requirements | Essential | Desirable |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| Training & Experience | | |
| A relevant degree and post-graduate qualification or significant experience in a relevant area: land management, environmental science, natural resource management or similar. | X | |
| Experience of working with/engaging the farming community, ideally on environmental issues. | X | |
| Experience of collating and summarising technical information in an engaging way for external/non-technical audiences. | | X |
| Basic knowledge of using, adjusting and setting up monitoring equipment, sensors, taking samples etc. | | X |
| Track record of successfully delivering projects and satisfying funders' requirements. | | X |
| Experience of managing projects. | | X |
| Knowledge & Understanding | | |
| A basic understanding of water quantity and quality issues related to land management. | X | |
| A sound understanding of farming practices and agri-environment schemes, and an appreciation of the challenges facing farming businesses and the motivations/drivers of farmer behaviour. | X | |
| Knowledge of regenerative agricultural practice and some experience of applying these practices. | | X |
| Knowledge of NbS measures, including Natural Flood Management measures, and how to apply them. | | X |
| Knowledge of the objectives, drivers and funding mechanisms of other stakeholders: water companies, local authorities, environmental NGOs, local businesses and other land users. | | X |
| Skills & Personal Attributes | | |
| Excellent written and verbal communication skills. | X | |
| Ability to engage positively with internal and external stakeholders. | X | |
| Strong organisational and planning skills, able to prioritise workloads. | X | |
| Practical, problem solving and independent mind-set. | X | |
| Ability to work as part of a team and independently . | X | |
| Proficiency in GIS and spatial analysis. | | X |
| Proficient IT skills, particularly MS Office. | X | |
| Willingness to learn and be flexible to support a growing organisation. | X | |
| Miscellaneous | | |
| Commitment to equality of opportunity. | X | |
| Ability to work occasional evenings and weekends | X | |
| Current driving licence and vehicle which can be used for work purposes, and happy to drive a van. | X | |
| Suitable, safe home working environment. | X | |

Conditions of service

Salary: £29,000 - £34,000 (pro rata for part time) commensurate with experience.

Contract period: The position is full time or 0.8 FTE, on a 12-month fixed-term contract. It is expected that the role will continue, subject to performance and funding. The appointment will be subject to a six-month probationary period.

Pension: SERT operates a contributory pension scheme and will pay 9% of salary subject to a 6% employee contribution.

Homeworking and vehicle: The Trust operates a mix of home and office based working, with travel across the SERT area, and so you will need to be able to provide a suitable home working environment, with the Trust office located in Leatherhead. We will provide a laptop and mobile phone. We would prefer the post-holder to be based in the SERT area, but this is not an absolute requirement. A full driving license and access to your own vehicle is required.

Annual leave: Annual leave entitlement is 25 days plus public holidays, pro rata for part time.

Hours of work: The basic working week is 37.5 hours. Some evening or weekend work will be required for which time off in lieu can be taken. No overtime will be paid.

Right to work in UK: All applicants must have the right to work in the UK. We do not sponsor applicants from overseas.

Employee benefits

- Hybrid working and homeworking
- Flexible and part-time working opportunities
- Pension contribution of 9% salary, subject to 6% employee contribution
- Life Assurance cover with SERT's Pension Scheme
- Annual Cost of Living Adjustment Review (COLA)
- Enhanced leave policies including sickness and maternity
- Four staff away days per year
- Commitment to career development and training
- Free Employee Assistance Programme
- Wellbeing team, with trained Mental Health First Aiders
- Annual Staff Survey

Application process

At SERT we believe in equality of opportunity and positively encourage applications from suitably qualified and eligible candidates regardless of age, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief, marital/civil partnership status, or pregnancy and maternity. We are committed to better reflecting society and the communities who use, need and enjoy our rivers within our workforce. We welcome requests for flexible working. All applications will be judged solely on merit.

Please email the following to jobs@southeastriverstrust.org:

- a completed Application Form for the relevant job role that you are applying for

- a completed Equality and Diversity Monitoring Form

The deadline for applications 16th August 10pm with interviews taking place on 22nd and 23rd August via Zoom. Please get in touch if you are unable to make this date.

If you would like to discuss the position please email jobs@southeastriverstrust.org, with your enquiry and we will arrange to call you back.

Applicant privacy policy

When submitting your application to us, it is important you are aware of what will happen to your personal data after the position is filled. Please download and read our Applicant Privacy Notice from the website.